

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION**

KAREEM JEFFERSON,)(Civil Action No.: 4:21-cv-545
)((Jury Trial)
<i>Plaintiff,</i>)(
)(
V.)(
)(
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS,)(
SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ, <i>Individually,</i> and)(
ALEXANDER RAMOS, <i>Individually,</i>)(
)(
<i>Defendants.</i>)(

PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL COMPLAINT

1. Comes now KAREEM JEFFERSON (hereinafter sometimes Plaintiff or Kareem) complaining of DEFENDANTS HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS; SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ, *Individually*, and ALEXANDER RAMOS, *Individually*, would show the following:

A. INTRODUCTION

2. Kareem Jefferson had just finished serving his sentence at the Harris County jail and was getting ready to leave out the door when he was assaulted by Harris County detention officer Alexander Ramos for speaking. This assault was one of many unjustified assaults on inmates by guards at the Harris County jail.

B. JURISDICTION & VENUE

3. This Court has jurisdiction over Plaintiffs' federal claims, under 28 U.S.C.1331 and 2201, 42 U.S.C 1983 and 1988, and the First, Fourth, Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United

States Constitution, and supplemental jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C.1367(a), to hear Plaintiffs' state law claims if any.

4. Venue is proper in this Court under 28 U.S.C.1391(b) because the incidents at issue took place in Harris County, Texas, within the United States Southern District of Texas.

C. PARTIES

5. PLAINTIFF KAREEM JEFFERSON is a resident of Harris County, Texas.

6. DEFENDANT HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS is a governmental body existing under the laws of the State of Texas and can be served with process by serving the Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo at 1001 Preston, Suite 911, Houston, Texas 77002.

7. DEFENDANT SHERIFF ED GONZALEZ, *Individually*, is a resident of Harris County, Texas and can be served with process at 1201 Baker Street, Houston, Texas 77012.

8. DEFENDANT ALEXANDER RAMOS, *Individually*, is a resident of Harris County, Texas and can be served with process at 1201 Baker Street, Houston, Texas 77012.

D. ADDITIONAL FACTS

9. March 29, 2019 Kareem Jefferson was finished serving his sentence at the Harris County jail.

10. Kareem, while still at the jail, had his commissary bag with him and was in the general area at the jail designated for inmates about to be released.

11. Alexander Ramos, a Harris County detention officer, confronted Kareem that he was past a "line" on the floor where inmates cannot be.

12. Kareem spoke some non-threatening words to Ramos.

13. Ramos then struck Kareem with his fist and took him to the floor.

14. Kareem did not assault or attempt to assault Ramos. There was no justification for the assault upon Kareem.

15. Ramos filed a materially false incident report which falsely indicated that Kareem had engaged in the felony crime of assault on a public servant. As a result Kareem was charged with felony assault on a public servant.

16. Kareem was arrested, jailed, and prosecuted for the felony which pended for 610 days until dismissed in Kareem's favor December 1, 2020 without any obligation.

17. Harris County has had voluminous incidents of excessive force by guards in the decades prior to May 29, 2021, and many after until now.

18. While Harris County investigates some uses of force they use methods designed to lead to no discipline or wrongdoing.

19. Harris County does not investigate excessive force on a suspect if the person is charged with a crime in relation to the events where the excessive force occurred.

20. Sheriff Ed Gonzalez knows of the policies and the many instances of excessive force yet has not the practices and policies leading to excessive force. Sheriff Gonzalez is a policymaker for Harris County in regards to use of force, excessive force discipline, and IAD investigations.

VIOLATION OF THE 1ST, 4TH, 8TH AND 14TH AMENDMENTS

21. Plaintiff incorporates all preceding paragraphs as if set fully set forth herein.

22. The First Amendment provides, in part, that: *Congress shall make no law respecting [] abridging the freedom of speech [] the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

23. The Fourth Amendment guarantees everyone the right "to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures."

24. The Eighth Amendment prohibits Cruel and Unusual Punishment

25. The Fourteenth Amendment provides that “No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

26. Defendants violated all the above amendments, action under 42 U.S.C. Section 1983, when excessive force was used on Kareem for speaking and then he was maliciously prosecuted.

PUNITIVE DAMAGES

27. Kareem incorporates all preceding paragraphs as if set fully herein.

28. Sheriff Gonzalez’s and Alexander Ramos’s actions and inactions cause them to be liable for punitive damages as they were consciously and deliberately indifferent to the Plaintiff’s constitutional rights and they did the acts knowingly, such acts being extreme and outrageous and shocking to the conscious.

ATTORNEYS’ FEES

29. Kareem is entitled to recover attorneys’ fees and costs to enforce his Constitutional rights and under 42 U.S.C. Sections 1983 and 1988.

JURY TRIAL

30. Kareem requests a trial by jury on all issues triable to a jury.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff requests that the Court:

A. Enter judgment for the plaintiff and against Defendants holding them jointly and severally liable;

- B. Find that Plaintiff is the prevailing party in this case and award attorneys' fees and costs, pursuant to federal law, as noted against all defendants;
- C. Award damages to Plaintiff for the violations of his rights under the 1st, 4th, 8th, and 14th Amendments and under state law;
- D. Award Pre- and post-judgement interest;
- E. Award Punitive damages against each and every individually named defendant, and
- F. Grant such other and further relief as appears reasonable and just, to which plaintiff shows himself entitled.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Randall L. Kallinen

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